

"As a Member of the President's Export Council, I recognize that done right, trade agreements can create jobs, increase exports, and help our economy recover."

Washington, DC – Rep. Linda Sánchez, member of the President's Export Council (PEC) met with President Barack Obama in the White House East Room yesterday to discuss the Administration's ongoing commitment to export promotion.

The White House also released a report to the President on the National Export Initiative (NEI).

Council members discussed the strategies necessary to achieve the President's goal of doubling exports in the next five years and reached consensus on encouraging the President to reform and update the export control program; do more to promote tourism, including simplifying the process of obtaining tourist visas in certain trusted countries; and increase efforts to retrain returning veterans for employment in high wage, high skill jobs.

When the discussion turned to promoting the pending free trade agreements negotiated by the former Administration, Rep. Sánchez cautioned against advancing the agreements before negotiating significant improvements.

"As a Member of the President's Export Council, I recognize that done right, trade

agreements can create jobs, increase exports, and help our economy recover,” said Rep. Linda Sánchez.

“Done wrong, however, trade agreements send those same jobs off-shore, benefitting a narrow class of investors while leaving American working families behind.”

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Sánchez added: **“The private-sector members of the PEC encouraged the President to move forward quickly on the pending free trade agreements with South Korea, Colombia, and Panama. □ But before sending Congress the agreements for approval, I recommend he work to renegotiate them to ensure their benefits can be shared by average Americans as well as multinational corporations.”**

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The PEC voted to send the President letters with its recommendations on each of the four topics. In addition, Senators Brown and Stabenow, and Representatives Sánchez, Wu, and Schauer gave President Obama a letter sharing their differing views on the pending Free Trade Agreements.

The PEC will next meet on December 9, 2010.

Full text of the letter is below:

Dear Mr. President:

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We applaud your announcement of the formation of the President's Export Council (PEC) in July.□ Likewise, we are committed to working with you to develop a plan to help achieve the National Export Initiative's (NEI) goal of doubling US exports over the next five years.□ T he NEI is an ambitious challenge and by taking a collaborative, public-private approach to achieving the NEI's goals, we can make significant progress in strengthening our country's economy and creating millions of new jobs for American workers.

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While we also agree that negotiating bilateral, regional, and multilateral trade agreements can assist in achieving the NEI's objectives, we believe that such agreements will not improve the U.S. economy or reduce our trade deficit until we improve certain aspects of the pending agreements and strongly enforce existing agreements.□ Accordingly, we write to express our disagreement with the recommendations made in the letter from the private-sector members of the PEC to move forward quickly on the pending free trade agreements with South Korea, Colombia, and Panama.

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At a time when our economy is struggling to recover from the worst downturn since the Great Depression, we caution against advancing these agreements without significant changes.□ A vital component of an export and jobs creation strategy is a trade agenda that does not repeat the mistakes of the previous administration.

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We need to increase market access to US goods so that we are exporting products, not jobs.

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At the same time, we must make sure that trade agreements have strong enforcement

provisions that target the most pressing barriers facing American workers and businesses.

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Specifically, these agreements must be improved to promote robust, attainable labor and environmental standards; make the investment chapter, including the investor-state dispute settlement mechanism, more equitable; and enhance existing provisions on import safety and government procurement.

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We recognize, as you do, that done right, trade agreements can create jobs if they increase exports and help our economy recover. Done wrong, however, trade agreements send those same jobs off-shore, benefitting a narrow class of investors while leaving middle class American families behind. As members of your Export Council, we are eager to work with you to address these issues and to move forward with trade policies that reflect the changing needs of Main Street and the new realities of the global economy.

□ *We appreciate your*

consideration of our supplemental views.

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Sincerely,

Senator Sherrod Brown

Senator Debbie Stabenow

□ *Representative Linda Sánchez*

Representative Mark Schauer □

Representative David Wu

BACKGROUND:

The President's Export Council (PEC) is the principal national advisory committee on international trade. The Council advises the President of government policies and programs that affect US trade performance; promotes export expansion; and provides a forum for discussing and resolving trade-related problems among the business, industrial, agricultural, labor, and government sectors.

The administration's efforts, through the National Export Initiative, are focused on five areas including: access to credit, especially for small and midsize firms; more trade advocacy and export promotion efforts; removing barriers to the sale of U.S. goods and services abroad; enforcement of trade rules; and pursuing policies that will increase global economic growth so that there's a strong worldwide market for U.S. goods and services. The executive summary of the report is attached and the full report is

[HERE](#)

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